



16 January 2012

**Summary Report by the Chairman of the UNESCO IFAP Intergovernmental Council
(19th Meeting of the IFAP Bureau, January 17, 2012)**

Main achievements of the UNESCO Information for All Programme and its most topical problems are presented in two Reports on IFAP implementation prepared by the Secretariat and IFAP Chairman (36C/REP/16). These reports were discussed and approved at the 36th Session of the UNESCO General Conference.

It is important to point out that IFAP's **various and numerous** events and projects organized and executed in 2010-2011 reflected **all the priority lines of actions of the IFAP Strategic Plan** and were carried out in almost every region of the world. They engaged representatives of **over 120 countries of all regions** – politicians, government officials, researchers, librarians, archive specialists, writers, publishers, university professors, school teachers, service and content providers, representatives of international organizations that are UNESCO's strategic partners (such as ITU, IFLA, Council of Europe), national commissions for UNESCO, non-governmental structures and industries.

The activities included:

- Organizing and holding conferences, round tables, expert meetings, workshops, training courses, consultation meetings;
- Preparing, translating and disseminating publications;

- Preparing analytical reports and papers;
- Elaborating concept documents and guidelines;
- Elaborating global action plans;
- Elaborating policy frameworks;
- Carrying out research studies;
- Conducting monitoring studies;
- Organizing cooperation;
- Establishing competence centres;
- Giving public lectures;
- Presenting in mass media;
- Creating specialized virtual libraries, websites, portals, databases, etc.

Holding two major breakthrough forums can be seen as IFAP Chairman's most significant contribution to the IFAP implementation:

- The first-ever interdisciplinary [international conference “Preservation of Digital Information in the Information Society: Problems and Prospects”](#) (Annex 1), that took place in Moscow on October 3-5, 2011 and gathered about 150 participants representing 37 countries of all regions. In order to increase IFAP visibility, broaden geographical coverage and engage developing countries in the discussions conference invitations were sent to the national commissions for UNESCO and permanent delegations of all Member States to UNESCO.
- [The 2nd International Conference Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace](#) (Annex 2) that took place in Yakusk, on July 12-14, 2011 and brought together top experts from 30 countries of all continents.

The documents adopted by the participants of these meetings – the [Moscow Declaration on Digital Information Preservation](#) (Annex 3) and the [Yakutsk Call for Action: a Roadmap towards the World Summit on Multilingualism \(2017\)](#) (Annex 4) – has become fundamental

international documents in relevant spheres and are associated with IFAP. Both documents are published and widely circulated in English and Russian.

Chairperson initiated and was directly involved in:

1. Giving a boost to IFAP's cooperation with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and getting it to a higher level. It resulted, in particular, in:

- elaborating the IFAP-IFLA Joint Action Plan on Information Literacy;
- carrying out regular consultations with the leaders of IFLA Information Literacy Section and IFLA Headquarter on a wide range of problems;
- jointly organizing an international expert meeting on the localization of UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers;
- drafting Recommendations on Information Literacy Promotion Worldwide;
- engaging IFLA's three presidents (former, current and president-elect) and activists in preparing and holding the Moscow conference on the preservation of digital information, and an international workshop on open access in Ukraine;
- providing assistance in submitting IFLA Digital Library Manifesto to the 36th Session of the UNESCO General Conference for consideration and approval.

2. Elaborating significant proposals to the UNESCO Draft Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 concerning two IFAP priorities – Information Literacy and Information Preservation. To our deep regret the Secretariat did not take these proposals into account while elaborating the 36 C/5 Document despite the fact that the proposals had been prepared by dignified and recognized experts in both relevant fields.

3. Presenting detailed reports on IFAP in general and its priority action lines at such major international forums as WSIS Forum in Geneva (Switzerland), IFLA General

Conference in Gothenborg (Sweden), Turin Book Fair (Italy), international conferences in Almaty (Kazakhstan) and Baku (Azerbaijan), etc.

4. Organizing 10 special thematic seminars on all IFAP priorities within major international conferences for library, museum, archives and IT specialists, educators, publishers in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus (about 30 countries were represented at these events).

5. Assisting in the creation of IFAP national committees in Azerbaijan and Moldova.

6. Expertising a number of international projects implemented within IFAP and connected to its key issues; providing assistance to some of the projects, in particular, to the preparation of conferences in the Philippines and Grenada.

7. Establishing the Centre to Advance Multilingualism in Cyberspace under the Northeastern Federal University (Yakutsk, Russian Federation).

8. Translating and publishing in Russian UNESCO, IFAP and IFAP related materials to be promoted and distributed free of charge among information, educational, research and cultural institutions and national and local administrations in Russia and other CIS countries.

IFAP previous activities gained further development:

- The revision of the Code of Ethics was organized, which led, in fact, to elaborating a new draft (developed directly by Latvia and Venezuela), collecting amendments, subjecting them for consideration, finalizing and adopting the Code first by the IFAP Bureau and later on by the IFAP Intergovernmental Council, including the item on the Code in the agenda of the 36th Session of the General Conference and presenting the Code to the General Conference;
- Online Information Society Observatory has been operational.

With a view of strengthening IFAP, increasing its efficiency, visibility, and impact much attention was devoted to the issues of raising the productivity of the Bureau and Working Groups' activities, developing the interaction between the Bureau members and also between the Bureau and the Secretariat, determining and clearly dividing responsibilities of the Bureau

members and the Secretariat staff for IFAP activities in general and on certain priority action lines of the IFAP Strategic Plan. Relevant specific measures to be taken were formulated in the final documents of the 18th and 19th Meetings of the IFAP Bureau

All the activities aimed at ensuring Russian chairmanship in IFAP gained active organizational, political, information and financial support by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO. In order to guarantee this support the Russian IFAP Committee initiated two directives by the Russian Government. While executing these directives interministerial consultative meetings were held that provided opportunities to inform high officials of the Russian Government and federal agencies about IFAP and its achievements, the problems the Programme is to solve, about UNESCO in general.

That was the way to tackle the challenge of gaining financial support for the activities under IFAP considering that it was very difficult for us – as for many other countries – to obtain a contribution from the Government to the IFAP special account.

Resume

Despite all the problems and obstacles, despite persistent scepticism of some influential Member States towards IFAP the Programme has reached a brand new level and is arousing interest and gaining much more support from ever more countries. For the first time ever no criticism of IFAP was expressed at the UNESCO General Conference. Moreover, almost one third of the speakers expressed active support to IFAP and highlighted the necessity of its further strengthening.

It is a pleasure for me to mention those Secretariat staff members who are getting more and more involved in IFAP activities and are actively supporting the Programme – Indrajit Banerjee, Boyan Radoykov, Paul Hector, Irmgarda Kasinskaite, Sanjaya Mishra.

I wish to pay tribute to the solid intellectual work done under the Polish Chairmanship in IFAP, in particular by Mr Karol Jakubowicz, whose huge efforts helped breathe new life into the Programme. It was the basis for IFAP activities in 2010-2011.

Since 2008 IFAP has been the facilitator of constructive international cooperation in all its competence areas and contributed to the creation, dissemination and summarizing of the most modern, relevant and necessary interdisciplinary knowledge. Best practices were determined, world leading experts playing a crucial role in the policy development both in their countries and at the international level established personal contacts.

During my two-year chairmanship in IFAP, working in cooperation with various international organizations and experts, governmental and non-governmental structures, businesses I repeatedly received proofs of IFAP's uniqueness. It is the **only** intergovernmental programme in the world to raise and undertake comprehensive studies of the issues that are vitally important for building a pluralistic and inclusive information society (knowledge societies), including information accessibility and preservation, information ethics, information literacy and information for development. I am fully convinced that all those problems are equally topical for both developed and developing countries and no country is able to solve them alone.

IFAP's major strengths are its broad coverage and inter-disciplinary, cross-sectoral and integrated approaches as its basis. New important knowledge could be gained in this context only. IFAP gives us a new horizon, and there are no similar programmes in the world.

Each of IFAP priorities reflects, on the one hand, a new burning global problem and, on the other hand, those growth areas that educational, research, cultural institutions, information and communication organizations worldwide should develop in order to adapt efficiently to the challenges on the new information environment and contribute to the utmost to the development of each country and of the whole civilization.

Unfortunately, we are still very far from truly efficient comprehensive implementation of IFAP. Its huge potential remains almost hidden because of the lack of adequate funding and due

attention to the Programme. Not only IFAP's progress but even its very existence is frequently completely ignored. Bringing out the Programme's full potential should become UNESCO Secretariat's primary concern. Not the Bureau and Intergovernmental Council members who come and go, but the Secretariat is capable of ensuring IFAP's **consistent sustainable development**.

Both the Secretariat and the Bureau and Intergovernmental Council members should take a principled active stand so that all results achieved within IFAP become visible, and that in public conscious all its initiatives and progress are recognized and connected to IFAP and not to other programmes.

It is unacceptable that even key IFAP events do not find reflection at the main page of the UNESCO Portal and that 99 per cent of the messages in the CI News feeds refer to the International Programme for the Development of Communication.

IFAP's progress should be followed up and developed in every possible way for the ultimate profit of UNESCO and all its Member States in the future.

All the Bureau members and CI Sector staff should mobilize all professional, organizational and diplomatic resources in order to strengthen IFAP to the utmost all over the world and first of all within UNESCO.



Evgeny Kuzmin

IFAP Chair